

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-6 (cancelled).

7. (New) A micromechanical component, comprising:

a substrate;

at least one spring device; and

at least one seismic mass, the spring device being connected at a first end to the substrate and at a second end to the mass, and a spring constant of the spring device being configured so that a motion of the mass relative to the substrate is causable as a result of an acceleration relative to the substrate, a direction of the acceleration being parallel to a surface of the substrate;

wherein the spring device is designed for an intrinsically nonlinear behavior corresponding to a progressive spring characteristic curve, in which a greater acceleration is associated at least locally with a greater spring constant, so that the component exhibits, at least locally, a lesser sensitivity at greater acceleration.

8. (New) The micromechanical component as recited in claim 7, wherein the spring device includes two flexural spring elements arranged so that a movability of a first one of the flexural spring elements with respect to the substrate is restricted but not delimited by an elastic spring stop, the spring stop comprising the second one of the flexural spring elements, so that with increasing acceleration, the sensitivity of the component initially exhibits a constant value corresponding to a spring constant of the first one of the flexural spring element, whereas once the spring stop is reached the sensitivity exhibits, due to an entrainment of the second one of the flexural spring elements by the first one of the flexural spring elements upon further deflection, one of the higher value that is constant but corresponds to a higher spring constant.

9. (New) The micromechanical component as recited in claim 8, wherein the flexural spring elements each have an elongated shape, the flexural spring elements are disposed parallel to

one another transversely to the direction of the acceleration, a second end of the first one of the flexural spring elements being connected to the mass and projecting beyond a second end of the second one of the flexural spring element, the second end of the first one of the flexural spring elements being connectable indirectly to the mass by way of the first flexural spring element, and, as a result of a bending caused by the acceleration of the mass, of the first flexural spring element as far as the second flexural spring element, a surface of the first flexural spring element facing toward the second flexural spring element is configured to come to a stop against the second end of the second flexural spring element.

10. (New) The micromechanical component as recited in claim 7, wherein the spring device includes an elongated flexural spring element, disposed transversely to the direction of the acceleration and decreasing in thickness from the first end to the second end, the spring device having a spring constant that increases with bending.

11. (New) The micromechanical component as recited in claim 10, wherein a thickness of the spring device decreases pyramidally.

12. (New) The micromechanical component as recited in claim 11, wherein a component characteristic curve of the spring device has an approximately logarithmic profile.